

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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NSC-05 NSAE-00 PM-04 USIA-15 OES-06 SS-15 SP-02

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5599

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AMEMBASSY OSLO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SENV, ECE, NO

SUBJECT: ECE - FIFTH SESSION, SENIOR ADVISERS TO ECE GOVERNMENTS
ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS (SAEP), FEB. 21-25, 1977 - FINAL REPORT

REF: A) GENEVA 1362; B) USNATO 102; C) 76 GENEVA 9504;

D) 76 STATE 258428

1. SUMMARY: ECE/SAEP V DOMINATED BY TWO ISSUES; SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR ALL-EUROPEAN CONGRESSES ON ENERGY, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT (REPORTED REF A) AND DECISION TO GIVE PRIORITY TO NORWEGIAN PROJECT ON LONG-RANGE TRANSPORT OF AIR POLLUTION (LRT). NORWAY ALSO TABLED SEPARATE PROPOSAL FOR DISCUSSIONS WITHIN ECE FRAMEWORK TO DEVELOP MEASURES FOR REDUCTION OF EMISSIONS CAUSING LRT. IN-DEPTH POLICY DEBATE ON "ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT" (EIA) GAVE ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR LINKAGE OF TWO HELSINKI FINAL ACT ENVIRONMENTAL THEMES (LRT AND EIA). IN ADOPTING WORK PROGRAM FOR 1977-81 SAEP SHOWED CONTINUED INTEREST IN TIGHTER INTEGRATION OF CURRENT AND FUTURE WORK PROGRAM, ASSURING EFFECTIVE USE OF SECRETARIAT RESOURCES IN PRIORITY AREAS, AND CLOSER LINKAGE BETWEEN SAEP
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AND ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES OF OTHER PRINCIPAL SUBSIDIARY BODIES. TOPIC SELECTED FOR IN-DEPTH POLICY DEBATE AT 1978 SESSION IS "CONTROL OF THE FLOW OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES THROUGHOUT THE ENVIRONMENT." CONTINUED INTEREST WAS REFLECTED IN ENERGY-ENVIRONMENT INTER-RELATIONSHIP AND IN ASSURING APPROPRIATE SAEP INPUTS TO ECE ENERGY-RELATED ACTIVITIES. END SUMMARY

2. UNDER CHAIRMANSHIP NORWAY (LYKKE), MAJOR SUBSTANTIVE ACHIEVEMENT OF SAEP V WAS ADOPTION OF REPORT ENDORSING "COOPERATIVE PROGRAM FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF LONG-RANGE TRANSMISSION OF AIR POLLUTANTS IN EUROPE". SAEP GAVE HIGHEST PRIORITY TO THIS PROJECT, WHICH WOULD DEAL INITIALLY WITH SURPHUR DIOXIDE AND WHICH FOR PAST TWO YEARS HAS BEEN NORWEGIAN OBJECTIVE TO HELP COPE WITH ACID RAIN INUNDATING SCANDINAVIA. ALTHOUGH FINAL LIST TO BE FLESHED OUT, TEN ECE COUNTRIES, INCLUDING US AND CANADA, INDICATED AT SAEP INTENTION TO PRICIPATE. STEERING BODY WILL BE SET UP TO GUIDE PROJECT FOR WHICH ECE SECRETARIAT WILL PREPARE ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS, INCLUDING ANALYSIS OF WORK FOR SEAP. NORWAY WILL CONTINUE TO PLAY KEY ROLE, AS PROPOSED CHEMICAL ANALYSIS COORDINATION CENTER FOR PROJECT WILL BE LOCATED IN NORWAY.

3. RELATED TO, BUT NOT COUPLED WITH, FOREGOING PROJECT, NORWEGIAN REP OFFERED CAREFULLY-FRAMED PROPOSAL FOR DISCUSSIONS WITHIN ECE FRAMEWORK ON MEASURES FOR REDUCING EMISSIONS CAUSING TRANSBOUNDARY AIR POLLUTION IN EUROPE. PRUPOSE OF DISCUSSIONS WOULD BE TO DEVELOP PLAN OF ACTION WHICH WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED IN FORM OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON CONTROL OF AIRBORNE POLLUTANTS. WHILE NORWEGIAN DEL SAW NEW NORWEGIAN PROPOSAL AS RESPONSIVE TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF CSCE FINAL ACT, HE WAS CAREFUL NOT TO TIE IT TO SOVIET PROPOSAL FOR ALL-EUROPEAN CONGRESSES ON ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT AND ENERGY AND INFORMALLY DESCRIBED IT AS COMPLETELY UNCLASSIFIED

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SEPARATE. HE EXPRESSED HOPE, HOWEVER, THAT MANDATE FOR INITIATING DISCUSSIONS MIGHT BE ENDORSED BY BELGRADE CSCE FOLLOW-UP CONFERENCE. HE SUGGESTED THAT MEETINGS MIGHT COMMENCE WITHIN ABOUT ONE YEAR, WITH NORWAY AS HOST FOR FIRST MEETING. NORWEGIAN DEL SAID GON WOULD SOLICIT VIEWS OF OTHER GOVERNMENTS IN MONTHS AHEAD.

4. SWEDEN FULLY SUPPORTED NORWEGIAN PROPOSAL, NOTING, HOWEVER, THAT LONG-RANGE TRANSPORT OF AIR POLLUTANTS WAS ONE TOPIC SUGGESTED FOR ENVIRONMENT CONGRESS PROPOSED BY USSR. FINLAND EXPRESSED SATISFCATION THAT NORWAY HAD BROUGHT TO INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION NEED FOR PLAN TO REDUCE AIR POLLUTION IN EUROPE AND THAT CONCEPT WAS CONTAINED WITHIN FINAL ACT. UK, SPEAKING FOR EC-9, SAID DURING DISCUSSION ON PROJECT OUTLINED PARA 2 ABOVE THAT NORWEGIAN PROPOSAL WOULD BE CONSIDERED VERY CAREFULLY SINCE MATTERS TO BE DEALTH WITH WERE IMPORTANT AND WERE REFERRED TO IN CSCE FINAL ACT AND ECE DECISION D(XXXI). EC-9 WOULD NEED MORE DETAILS, HOWEVER, AND WOULD NEED TO CONSIDER

ONGOING WORK ALREADY UNDER WAY IN THIS FIELD, ESPECIALLY BY ECE, AND LOOKED FORWARD TO DISCUSSING QUESTIONS WITH NORWAY IN MONTHS AHEAD. US DEL SAID AT SAME TIME THAT US PREPARED TO SUPPORT ANY COOPERATIVE EFFORT CONTRIBUTING TO SOLUTION OF LRT PROBLEM BUT AVOIDED SPECIFIC ENDORSEMENT OF NORWEGIAN PROPOSAL. OTHER DELEGATIONS LIMITED THEIR STATEMENTS TO EXPRESSIONS OF SUPPORT FOR PROJECT IN PARA 2 ABOVE.

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5. POLICY DEBATE ON EIA WAS LARGELY SET-PIECE RECITATION OF CURRENT LEGISLATION AND ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS IN ECE COUNTRIES TO PROVIDE ASSESSMENT OF AND PROTECTION AGAINST ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS. US REP EMPHASIZED IMPORTANT ROLE PLAYED BY PUBLIC IN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT PROCESS AND MEANS WHEREBY USG ATTEMPTED TO ADDRESS TRANSBOUNDARY POLLUTION PROBLEMS. US ALSO DISSEMINATED COPIES OF REPORT ON EIS PROCESS (SAME AS CIRCULATED AT CCMS DUSSELDORF SESSION, RE-LABELLED). CONSENSUS WAS THAT THIS TOPIC OF CONTINUING AND CONSIDERABLE INTEREST, ESPECIALLY PUBLIC AWARENESS AND PARTICIPATION, AND THAT SAEP SHOULD SPONSOR SEMINAR ON GENERAL SUBJECT IN 1979, PREPARATORY MEETING FOR -WHICH WOULD BE HELD THIS YEAR. AT US SUGGESTION, SAEP AGREED TO SINGLE OUT LONG-RANGE TRANSPORT OF AIR POLLUTANTS AS A THEME FOR PROPOSED SEMINAR ON ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS.

6. WITH CANADA AND US OFFERING PRINCIPAL SUGGESTIONS, SECRETARIAT UNDERTOOK TO ORGANIZE FUTURE AGENDAS AND

DOCUMENTATIONS SO THAT BOTH ONGOING WORK PROGRAM AND
FUTURE ACTIVITIES COULD BE CONSIDERED IN A SINGLE
DOCUMENT UNDER ONE AGENDA ITEM. WHILE COMPLIMENTING
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SECRETARIAT EFFORTS, LATTER WAS URGED TO FOCUS LIMITED PERSONNEL
RESOURCES ON HIGH PRIORITY SUBJECT AREAS (E.G., LTT).
SPECIAL ATTENTION WAS SUGGESTED TO SECRETARIAT CONTACTS
WITHIN ECE TO ASSURE CLOSE AND CONTINUING COORDINATION OF
ENVIRONMENTAL WORK OF OTHER PRINCIPAL SUBSIDIARY BODIES
(PSB) WITH SAEP ACTIVITIES. AMONG GROUP CONSIDERED ESPECIALLY
IMPORTANT WERE CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS AND
ELECTRIC POWER AND INLAND TRANSPORT COMMITTEES. LATTER'S
WORK ON NOISE POLLUTION FROM MOTOR VEHICLES WAS CONSIDERED
AS HAVING SPECIAL INTEREST FOR SAEP.

7. AS PART OF OVERALL ECE/PSB PARTICIPATION, SAEP
CONSIDERED IT IMPORTANT TO CONTRIBUTE TO EXERCISE
OF SENIOR ECONOMIC ADVISERS ON OVERALL ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVIES
UP TO 1990 BY INDICATING SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL
ASPECTS AFFECTING FUTURE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN ECE
REGION. SAEP ALSO APPROVED CONTINUED ATTENTION TO
ENERGY-ENVIRONMENT INTERFACE, NOTING THAT WHEREEVER POSSIBLE
ECE GOVERNMENTS SHOULD ASSURE ATTENDANCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL
SPECIALISTS AT ECE ENERGY-RELATED MEETINGS. SECRETARIAT
WAS AUTHORIZED TO CONTINUE PREPARATION OF STUDIES SHOWING
ENERGY-ENVIRONMENT LINKAGES, BUT IN VIEW OF OPPOSITION BY
FRG AND FRANCE, UNCLEAR WHETHER STUDY CAN EXTEND TO
NUCLEAR ENERGY, AND MATTER MAY BE BROUGHT TO ECE 32ND SESSION
FOR DECISION.

8. TIGHT SCHEDULE PREVENTED TRANSLATION OF PORTION OF
FINAL REPORT INTO ALL THREE ECE LANGUAGES AT LAST DAY OF
MEETING. ACCORDINGLY, SOVIET DELEGATION HAD NO
OPPORTUNITY TO REVIEW FINAL DOCUMENTATION IN RUSSIAN.
THIS PRESUMABLY EXPLAINS SOVIET CLOSING STATEMENT THAT
FINAL REPORT COULD ONLY BE APPROVED BY SOVIET DEL
ON PROVISIONAL BASIS.

COMMENT: PRINCIPAL US OBJECTIVES WERE BASICALLY
ACCOMPLISHED: TO ENCOURAGE FORWARD MOVEMENT IN SAEP ON
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LONG-RANGE TRANSPORT OF AIR POLLUTANTS AND
LINKAGE OF LATTER WITH ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT
AS TWO TASKS DEVOLVING ON ECE FROM CSCE FINAL ACT.

AT FORTHCOMING 32ND ECE SESSION, US DELEGATION WILL BE OBLIGED TO ADDRESS SOVIET PROPOSALS FOR ALL-EUROPEAN CONGRESSES, WITH POSSIBLY SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON ENVIRONMENTAL MEETING. INDEPENDENTLY OF US AND WESTERN CAUCUS POSITION RE SOVIET PROPOSALS, IT WOULD SEEM EXTREMELY WORTHWHILE TO GIVE ALL POSSIBLE ENCOURAGEMENT TO SAEP'S SPECIFIC EFFORTS TO ADDRESS AIR POLLUTION PROBLEMS. IN HELPING TO ADDRESS A MAJOR CHALLENGE ON A GLOBAL SCALE ECE'S EFFORT CAN CONTRIBUTE NOT ONLY TO THE EUROPEAN REGIONAL EFFORT, BUT ALSO FIT IN WELL WITH UNEP'S GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING SYSTEM AND THE WORK OF WMO. CATTO

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Message Attributes

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